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Great Britain in Egypt

By HERBERT ADAMS GIBBONS

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**BOOKS BY
HERBERT ADAMS GIBBONS**

The New Map of Europe

The New Map of Africa

The New Map of Asia

The Foundation of the Ottoman Empire

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The Little Children of the Luxembourg

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Great Britain in Egypt

By HERBERT ADAMS GIBBONS

The American people has been asked to become a close partner with the British Empire in the League of Nations. Below is given one phase of that partner's imperialistic character.



REVIEW of editorial comment of the London and Paris press upon the treaty deliberations in the United States Senate reveals the curious fact that nothing our senators have done has been more bitterly resented than the hearing of the claims of subject nationalities by the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. Our Allies assumed that the rôle of the Senate in ratifying treaties was purely perfunctory. Confronted with a *fait accompli*, they would of course sign on the dotted line. At any rate, it was not the business of the American Senate to investigate and discuss "the internal affairs" of the Allies of the United States. All controversial matters had been thrashed out during the peace conference and were settled to the satisfaction of the signatories of the Treaty of Versailles.

Fortunately, the majority of the members of the Senate did not take so lightly the obligation imposed upon them by the American Constitution. Nor did they lack what we Americans love to call "horse sense." The Treaty of Versailles created a partnership, and bound the "Principal Allied and Associated Powers" to pool their armies and navies in defending the status quo established by the treaty. Notwithstanding his denial of this interpretation of the treaty, when on his Western tour he begged the American people to ratify the treaty without reservations, President Wilson believed in Paris that he was contracting such a partnership, with equal and automatic responsibilities. According to the stenographic notes of the eighth plenary session of the peace conference, which I have in

my possession, President Wilson said to Premier Bratianu of Rumania:

You must not forget that it is force which is the final guarantee of the public peace If the world is again troubled, if the conditions that we all regard as fundamental are upset and contested, the guarantee which is given you means that the United States will send to this side of the ocean their army and their fleet. Is it surprising that, this being the case, we desire that the settlement of the different problems appear entirely satisfactory to us?

A partnership of this sort is not to be entered into lightly. It is not impertinence, as some British and French friends call it, but common sense, that has made the United States Senate examine in detail the contract it was asked to ratify and to weigh the liabilities of the partnership. Invited to enter a partnership, a business man does not come to a decision without making a careful investigation of the business methods of his proposed partners, as shown by the past management of affairs in which they were interested, and without questioning them and others narrowly as to the responsibilities he will be expected to share and the obligations in which he will become involved by entering the partnership.

The Treaty of Versailles, in Part IV, dealing with "German Rights and Interests outside Germany," provides for a new status quo which involves the United States in the betrayal of our principles and of our interests as well. Section VI (Articles 147-154) and Section VIII (Articles 156-158) are indefensible, whether we view them from

the point of view of international law and international morality or from the point of view of the particular interests of the United States. Section VI compels Germany to recognize the British protectorate over Egypt, and Section VIII to transfer her rights and concessions in Shan-tung to Japan.

Egypt and China were belligerent nations, drawn into the war on our side with the promise that their integrity and independence would be preserved. The League of Nations, in which all nations, great and small, strong and weak, would participate with equal rights and privileges, was held before them during the war as the reward of their sacrifices. But at Paris Egypt and China were not allowed to have any share or voice in the deliberations affecting the political status of the former and the territorial integrity of the latter. Much has been said and written in America about the Shan-tung deal. China has many and powerful friends, partly because of our distrust of Japan and partly because of our great and vital interests in the far East. Few have spoken up for Egypt. The facts in the case have been deliberately misrepresented, and there is a natural inclination to refrain from criticism of our British cousins. We want to believe in their good faith and honesty of purpose. We do believe in the straightforwardness and sincerity of our kinsfolk, whose culture and traditions and ideals are inseparable from our own. But it is for this very reason that I want to set forth the facts in the Egyptian question. Because I am myself of unmixed British blood, with eight generations of English Quakers who married in meeting behind me, I cannot believe that English public opinion, if fully and impartially informed, would indorse the policy of the British Government toward Egypt.

It has been charged that the Egyptians have been led on falsely to hope for their emancipation by the idealism of President Wilson, and that the agitation in Egypt is due to the denaturing by the American President and American writers of the objects of the war. In Egypt and at Paris British friends have not hesitated to point this out to

me and to tell me that the British Government did not purpose to be bound by "the knight-errantry of you visionary busybodies," to use the exact words of a British official who had spent most of his career in Egypt. From my personal experience of the state of public opinion in Egypt before President Wilson made any speeches and before the intervention of the United States, and from a study of the official relations between Great Britain and Egypt, I am able to prove that this attitude is untenable. British officials who talk this way do not know what their own statesmen have said and what Egyptians were thinking long before they ever heard of President Wilson. At the beginning of 1916 I spent three months in Egypt in close contact with the sultan, the prime minister, and leading Egyptians, Christians as well as Moslems. I cannot recall that they ever mentioned President Wilson or the attitude of my country toward their problem, but they talked of nothing else but their complete emancipation as the result of the World War. My readers will have to bear with several quotations. I have to establish the fact that the Egyptians had reason to expect independence after the armistice, and that their demand to be represented at the peace conference was based upon Great Britain's own official statements.

On August 10, 1882, a month after the bombardment of Alexandria and the occupation of Egypt, Mr. Gladstone said in the House of Commons:

I can go so far as to answer the honorable gentleman when he asks me whether we contemplate an indefinite occupation of Egypt. Undoubtedly of all things in the world, that is the thing we are not going to do. It would be absolutely at variance with all the principles of H. M.'s Government, and the pledges we have given Europe.

A year later, on August 9, 1883, Mr. Gladstone said in the same place:

We are against this doctrine of annexation; we are against everything that resembles or approaches it; and we are against all language that tends to bring

about its expectation. We are against it on the ground of the interests of England; we are against it on the ground of our duty to Egypt; we are against it on the ground of the specific and solemn pledges given the world in the most solemn manner and under the most critical circumstances, pledges which have earned for us the confidence of Europe during the course of difficult and delicate operations, and which, if one pledge can be more solemn and sacred than another, special sacredness in this case binds us to observe.

British state papers and the records of the House of Commons and the House of Lords contain half a hundred categorical assurances to the same effect. Over a period of thirty years, Mr. Gladstone, Lord Granville, Lord Dufferin, Sir Charles Dilke, Lord Derby, Lord Salisbury, Lord Cromer, Sir Edward Grey, and Sir Eldon Gorst officially disavowed the intention of Great Britain to remain in Egypt, and promised the Egyptians specifically that their Government would never proclaim a protectorate. Nothing could be more concise and definite than the declaration of Lord Salisbury in the House of Lords on August 12, 1889:

We cannot proclaim our protectorate over Egypt nor our intention to occupy it effectively and perpetually; this would amount to breaking the international pledges signed by England.

During the recent war those at the head of the British Government gave no less unreserved pledges to the Egyptians and to the civilized world. The British censorship, exceedingly rigorous in Egypt, allowed the native press to publish the successive declarations of British premiers and ministers. Without question these unqualified promises made the Egyptian people believe that the defeat of Germany, to accomplish which they were contributing in human lives and treasure as heavily as any Allied nation, would mean their independence. At the Guildhall on November 9, 1914, Mr. Balfour, speaking for the Government, said:

We fight not for ourselves alone, but for

civilization drawn to the cause of small states, the cause of all those countries which desire to develop their own civilization in their own way, following their own ideals without interference.

At the same place a year later Premier Asquith declared:

We shall not pause nor falter until we have secured for the smaller states their charter of independence and for the world at large its final emancipation from the reign of force.

More emphatic still was the policy of Great Britain set forth by Mr. Asquith in the House of Commons on December 20, 1917. A Reuter despatch, given prominence in the Cairo press with the assent of the British authorities, quoted Mr. Asquith's words as follows:

We ought to make it increasingly clear by every possible means that the only ends we are fighting for are liberty and justice for the whole world, through a confederation of great and small states, all to possess equal rights. A League of Nations is the ideal for which we are fighting, and we shall continue fighting for it with a clear conscience, clean hands and an unwavering heart.

This was at the time when Egyptian aid was essential, according to General Allenby, to complete the crushing of Turkey.

This ought to be enough to demonstrate the lack of foundation of the charge that the attitude of the Egyptian people toward the British Government since the armistice is due to a worldwide heralding of American idealism in the speeches of President Wilson. It is of course true that we Americans accepted in good faith the assurances of British statesmen and entered the war against Germany for the triumph of the war aims already set forth by them. But long before the World War the Egyptian nationalist movement was fostered and encouraged by Europeans who had no connection with and who were not under the influence of German imperialist propaganda or American "sentimentalism." The sole instance of

American intervention in the Egyptian question is that of Roosevelt, who certainly did nothing to encourage Egyptian aspirations.

I first became acquainted with the Egyptian nationalist movement in Paris salons at the time of the Boer War. French *intellectuels* and politicians were not under the influence of German propaganda in their hatred and denunciation of England as the power which aimed at world domination through hypocrisy and aggression against small nations. Resentment over Fashoda was still keen and brought back the bitter memory of how the British supplanted the French in Egypt and gained control of the canal that had been dug by French brains and enterprise. Every one sympathized with Egyptians and Boers who were resisting British imperialism. Mustafa Kamel, leader of the Egyptian nationalists, received more than simply moral aid from certain French circles, notably that dominated by the wonderful personality of Mme. Juliette Adam. But I was not greatly impressed, for I saw in French sponsorship of Egyptian nationalism prejudice against England rather than conviction of the justice of the Egyptian cause. Why? I am going to confess frankly. The same people who denounced Great Britain could not speak too bitterly about my own country's war against Spain and imputed to us the intention to remain in Cuba. That was too much for my Anglo-Saxon instinct. But when I returned to London, my attention was once more fastened on the Boer and Egyptian causes by the impassioned eloquence on behalf of subject races of a rising Welsh Liberal, David Lloyd George, who was tireless in protesting against his Government's policy of aggression and oppression.

French support for the Egyptian nationalist cause ceased after the Anglo-French agreement of 1904, just as Russian support for Indian nationalism ceased after the Anglo-Russian agreement of 1907. British statesmen, after a long period of uncertainty, chose what they considered the lesser of two evils, and compounded their colonial rivalries with France and Russia instead of with Germany. Left to them-

selves, as the Poles and other subject nationalities of Russia and Austria-Hungary were left to themselves, the Egyptians could do nothing. Between 1908 and 1914 I enjoyed the privilege of studying the various nationalist movements of Europe and the near East on the ground. The same factors worked everywhere against the success of these movements. As long as the great powers were agreed upon maintaining the status quo, there was no hope of emancipation. Internal agitation, inciting to defiance of constituted authority, could lead only to local outbreaks. These were easily suppressed, and the leaders were punished for "disorder" and "lawlessness." College professors, priests, lawyers, physicians, and students could alone afford to take the risk of espousing the national cause.

The Egyptian nationalist movement, frowned upon by European and American tourists because of its irresponsibility, its unreasonableness, and its menace to law and order, presented to the impartial and unhurried observer the same phenomena as the nationalist movements of races liberated and raised to the rank of sovereign states by the treaties of Versailles and St.-Germain. Russian, German, Austrian, and Hungarian military and civilian despots did not use different methods for checking nationalist aspirations or different arguments to justify their actions from those used by Cromer and Kitchener and others in Egypt. I make this statement, based upon personal investigation and observation, without fear of contradiction. The man who argues that "the case of the Egyptians is different" is on untenable ground.

Let us meet this issue squarely. The delegates of the Egyptian people were denied a hearing at the peace conference. While Poles, Czecho-Slovaks, Jugo-Slavs, and Arabs of the Hedjaz saw their countries emancipated and erected into sovereign states, the Egyptians, against their unanimous protest, were placed under a British protectorate. In excuse or explanation of this disposition of Egypt in the Treaty of Versailles several arguments are advanced.

We are told that the Conference of

Paris could not settle the destinies of the whole world, and that Egypt was an internal question of the British Empire. But if the status of Egypt, like that of India, Ireland, and other countries, was outside of the scope of the peace conference, and was an internal British question, why, then, was Egypt mentioned in the treaty at all? Reference to any manual of international law, to any history of the nineteenth century, to the declarations of British statesmen quoted in this article, will dispose of the contention that Egypt belongs to the British Empire. According to the *Statesman's Year-Book* for 1913, an English publication, Egypt is listed under "Turkey and Tributary States," whose "administration is carried on by native Ministers, subject to the ruling of the Khedive." According to a letter, published in the London "Times" on December 21, 1914, from King George to Sultan Hussein, who consented to succeed Abbas Hilmi, deposed by the British for favoring Turkey, the war-time protectorate was proclaimed by the British "to overcome all influences which are seeking to destroy the independence of Egypt." Sultan Hussein told me that the British Government promised him that the Egyptians would participate in the peace conference and would have their say in establishing the new international status of Egypt.

But even if we do not admit that Egypt broke the tie of vassalage to Turkey when she refused to follow Turkey into the war on the side of Germany and did not thus become automatically a sovereign state, how can we ignore the explicit provision of Article XXII of the covenant of the League of Nations, concerning "territories which as a consequence of the late war have ceased to be under the sovereignty of the states which formerly governed them"? This article provides a mandatory régime for territories separated from the Ottoman Empire, with the express stipulation that "the wishes of these communities must be a principle consideration in the selection of the mandatory."

If Egypt is an independent and sovereign state, the British protectorate is null and void. If Egypt is a territory now separated from the Ottoman Empire, the maintenance of the British protectorate, temporarily declared as a war measure, is a violation of Article XXII of the covenant. According to international law, changes in the status quo made in war-time are valid only so long as the war lasts.

We are told that Great Britain cannot be expected to get out of Egypt because control of the Suez Canal is vital to her imperial interests and because she now has so much capital invested in Egypt. This argument for destroying the independence of a nation shows that the detested Prussian mentality is unfortunately not confined to Germany. Germany needed to control her outlet to the sea through Belgium, she needed to dominate the countries that stood between her and Turkey, she needed Schleswig because control of the Kiel Canal was vital to her imperial interests, and she had so much capital invested in her African colonies and Shan-tung! Now, did the Treaty of Versailles emancipate nationalities subject to Germany because they had the right to govern themselves and take away the African colonies because the natives did not want their rule and banish Germany from China because Germany had gained her foothold there by force and subterfuge? We answer affirmatively. It is our justification for having fought the war and dictated the Treaty of Versailles to our vanquished foe. In a dozen speeches during 1919 Premier Lloyd George gave these reasons for the stipulations of the Treaty of Versailles. Since we believe in his sincerity, we are sure that he will be the first to reject a Prussian argument for defending the British protectorate in Egypt.

We are told that the British have brought great blessings to Egypt, have made the country prosperous, have freed the common people from servitude to the ruling classes, and that if the

¹ In answer to a letter from Senator Owen asking for light upon the American Government's understanding of the situation in Egypt, Secretary Lansing replied on December 16, 1919, that "it is assumed that it is the purpose of Great Britain to carry out the assurances given by King George the Fifth of England to the late Sultan of Egypt, as published in the London 'Times' of December 21, 1914." In this letter Secretary Lansing qualifies the protectorate with the significant adjective "so-called."

British got out, Egypt would fall into anarchy, economic chaos, and "the old tyranny would be revived." This, after all, is the supreme justification of governing people by force against their will. It is the theory of the Imperial German Government, which we fought the war to refute. If we believe in it and advance it as a justification for the British protectorate over Egypt, then the treaties of Versailles and St.-Germain, in almost all of their provisions to emancipate subject races are crimes against civilization. For no intelligent man can deny the purely material prosperity of Alsace-Lorraine, Schleswig, Silesia, and Posnanian under German rule. Alsations, Lorrainers, Danes, and Poles, if we take the tests by which the Egyptians are told to count their blessings, enjoyed unrivaled prosperity and perfect security under the German yoke. As portions of a flourishing industrial state, they doubled in population and quintupled in wealth. Think of the railways, roads, canals, efficient administration, public buildings, admirable laws, social as well as agricultural and industrial, of imperial Germany! By the same token, the traveler in the Hapsburg Empire could not help admitting that Bohemia was one of the most flourishing countries of Europe, that Triest and Fiume were cleaner and better equipped and better managed than Italian ports, that the Jugo-Slavs had much more prosperity and material comfort than the Serbians, that the Transylvanians were largely free from the terrible state of ignorance and agricultural exploitation of the Rumanian peasants, and that the political and economic situation of the Austrian Poles was enviable in comparison with the oppression of their brothers under the rule of one of the Entente Allies.

Cold-blooded materialists, who measure happiness and contentment by dollars in the bank, public works, and a good police system, wonder at the stupidity of the Egyptians in demanding the right "to develop their own civilization in their own way, following their own ideals without interference," as Mr. Balfour defined the war aim of Great Britain in his famous Guildhall speech. But if they do this and are sincere and

logical, they must deplore the defeat of Germany and Austria-Hungary. They must be pitying half a dozen emancipated races of central and eastern Europe for the mess our well-meaning, but foolish, war to liberate them has got them into. Of course Alsations and Lorrainers, Danes, Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, Jugo-Slavs, Hungarian Rumanians, and Austrian Italians will deny that their unquestioned material prosperity was due to beneficent German rule, to German administrative ability, to having been included within the *Zollverein* of a populous and flourishing industrial state, to the advantageous markets open to their products through the prestige of Germany, the growth of her merchant fleet, and the protection of her navy. They point to other factors—native energy and industry, remarkable initiative and development before the German conquest, and above all to their geographical position, the rich production of their soil, and the world-wide phenomenon of increased productive wealth through improved and multiplied transportation facilities and greater scientific knowledge. What happened under German rule there is no reason for believing they could not have accomplished if left to themselves. And they point out to you convincingly how the conquerors did not forget to advance their own interests by reason of their political control.

The Egyptians use against Great Britain the same points which the races we have liberated use against Germany when they deny the assumption that they owe their material blessings to British rule and when they affirm that the Government which held them in subjection has exploited them. The Suez Canal was dug and the railway and irrigation system planned and partly constructed before the British came. Mohammed Ali and his successors were enlightened rulers, and they were responsible for the Europeanization of Egypt. They freed the country from the Turkish yoke, successfully defended its independence, and laid the foundations of the present economic prosperity. The British have reimbursed themselves richly for what they have done in developing irrigation and trans-

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portation facilities. Not only have the Egyptian people paid in taxes every cent spent upon them, but they were mulcted for a large portion of the expense of the reconquest of the Sudan, and the graft of big salaries and pensions to British officials and of the maintenance of the British garrison and police system has come out of the pockets of the Egyptian people. An appalling sum in gold goes from Egypt every year to be spent in England by the families of British officials and by the large roll of pensioners. The story of how Great Britain has used her position in Egypt to prevent the establishment of a native cotton textile industry for the benefit of Manchester and to cheat the Egyptian peasants out of the open market price of their cotton for the benefit of Liverpool is a telling refutation of the smug and comforting theory that the British occupation of Egypt is an altruistic burden unwillingly assumed by the British Government for the benefit of the Egyptians.

We are told that it is impossible to grant independence or even self-government to a "backward race," which is unable to manage its own affairs, much less defend itself against enemies from outside. This excuse for the protectorate is given by many who admit frankly that all the other arguments for British rule are indefensible. It is the favorite plea of the imperialists. You may have answered their other arguments, but here they think they have you. And they have, if you are a follower of the philosophy of Bernhardt, Treitschke, and others who interpret historical evolution as inevitably limited by the law of force. Does *Macht geht vor Recht*? If so, Part I of "The Covenant of the League of Nations," in the Treaty of Versailles, is one of the most brazen and shameless cloaks of hypocrisy that has ever been written. But if the League of Nations was conceived in sincerity, British statesmen must be the first to admit that there is now in the world a possibility for the independent existence of small nations.

If the reader thinks that my argument is weak, because we must distinguish between a "small nation" and a "backward race" and because I have put

European Christian races on the same plane with a non-European Mohammedan race, I have my answer in the Treaty of Versailles itself. Among the "high contracting parties" we read "His Majesty the King of the Hedjaz," whose representatives signed the Treaty of Versailles on behalf of a sovereign and independent state. In Article 434 Germany is forced to recognize the independence of the new states created during the war.

The "backward-race" argument is denied by the Treaty of Versailles itself. If, as the treaty provides, the Arabs on one side of the Red Sea are recognized as forming a sovereign and independent state, where does the disability of the Arabs on the other side come in? Puzzle over this question as much as you will; there is no answer. When we created the Hedjaz as a sovereign and independent state, we deprived ourselves of using the "backward-race" argument against Egyptian independence. When we consider that the Hedjaz never was a state and is not a geographical unity and that its inhabitants are mostly nomad Bedouins with no traditions or little education and virtually no trained leaders, when we realize that the Hedjaz was for a time during the last century a province of Egypt, how can we have the face to say to the Egyptians that the Treaty of Versailles put them under the British protectorate because they were not ready for statehood and could not possibly be expected to organize a self-governing state and manage their own affairs?

Finally, we are told that the Egyptians really do not want to have their independence, that if the British got out, the Mohammedans would massacre the Christians, and that the agitators for independence are irresponsible, self-appointed leaders, working for their own selfish ends or contaminated with Bolshevism. That is the last-ditch argument for the British protectorate. I heard it often at Paris. It has been given in official British statements, and crops up over and over again in the British and American press. Let me say very positively that those who use this argument do not know what they are talking about. If there is any na-

tive Egyptian who does not ardently desire to see his country independent, I have failed to find him. Nor has the British commission, headed by Viscount Milner, backed by a British army, and with the power to hand out attractive jobs at fat salaries, been able to get a single Egyptian to come out in favor of the British protectorate. When Viscount Milner suggested to the Grand Mufti that there were Egyptians eager to testify in favor of the protectorate, but did not, owing to intimidation, the religious head of the Egyptians gave to him Cardinal Mercier's answer to Baron von der Lancken, "Every country has its traitors."

The Egyptian nationalist movement has followed the evolution of other nationalist movements during the World War. Before the war it was weak and hesitating for the reasons I have given above. But between 1914 and 1918 the Egyptians, like other subject races of Europe and the near East, were awakened from unspoken dreams to the tangible hope of a glorious national revival. I had the privilege of spending several months in Egypt during this awakening. I saw people transformed from apathy or despair to living, burning hope by the promises of Balfour, Asquith, and Viviani. They were not hostile to the British. Far from it. They thought the great struggle of freemen all over the world against militarism and brute force, as symbolized by the German Kaiser, was causing the British to see a new light in the matter of their own dealings with subject races.

One day, after a luncheon at which the sultan gathered to meet me the members of his household and of the Egyptian cabinet, I persuaded Sultan Hussein to accord me an interview in which he would express his devotion to and faith in the Allied cause and would at the same time recognize the reasonableness of the British expectation to continue to control the Suez Canal and the foreign and financial affairs of Egypt after the war. I explained to him how helpful such a declaration would be to prevent false hopes on the part of Germany in regard to the nationalist movement. I told him

frankly that I had been sent to Egypt by Mr. James Gordon Bennett to help the Allied cause, and that at that critical moment of the war a statement from him would render immense service to the British in the near East. Two days later the sultan sent Dr. Nimr, editor of a Cairo newspaper, to ask me to recall the interview. It was too late. I went to the palace to explain to the sultan that my cablegram had already gone. He sat for a moment in silence, and then his eyes filled with tears.

"I believe that we must agree to British control of our foreign affairs," he said, "or I should not have allowed the interview in the first place. But I fear a misunderstanding both on the part of my own people and of the British. The British Government asked me to take the sultanate when they deposed my nephew. I accepted the post and the war-time protectorate because we do not want the Turks and Germans in Egypt. Great Britain's interests and ours are identical when it comes to winning the war. But I do not want my people to think that I was unfaithful to the independence of Egypt. We have the definite promise of the British Government, only this is not the time to discuss the question in public. We shall have to wait until the end of the war."

The sultan requested his prime minister, Rushdi Pasha, to go into the matter with me in detail. I had several long talks with Rushdi Pasha. He explained to me why the war-time protectorate was established and why he, prime minister of the deposed Abbas Hilmi, had agreed to continue to hold office under the new régime. Rushdi Pasha feared the invasion of Egypt by the Turks and the Germans and believed that the Egyptians had every interest in not only keeping quiet during the war, but also actively coöperating with the British against what was a common enemy. In the presence of Adly Yeghen Pasha, minister of education, Rushdi Pasha outlined for me the grievances of the Egyptian people against the British, and the program of changes in the internal administration of Egypt which he proposed to present to the British Government in London when the

victory of Allied arms was assured. It was a reasonable program, and did not go so far as the unconditional independence of the Hedjaz or the implications in the repeated assurances of Allied statesmen. Rushdi Pasha wanted to get rid of the graft of English officials managing the internal affairs of the country in their own interest and in the interest of British manufacturers and merchants, and he demanded the recognition by Great Britain of Egypt's sovereignty over the Sudan and right to participate in any profits coming from the Sudan. The two Egyptians told me that only in this way would the Egyptians ever be masters in their own country. "We want for Egyptians the offices held by Britishers, and we want control of the revenues of our country, after foreign interest payments are guaranteed, so that we may educate our people. Our principal indictment of British rule is its utter disregard of the obligation of spending a fair part of the money derived from taxes on the education of the people. The British are deliberately keeping the Egyptians from getting an education, and then they tell the world that we are incapable of governing ourselves!"

What happened to the Egyptian nationalist cause between November 11, 1918, day of the armistice, and June 28, 1919, day of signing the Treaty of Versailles, demonstrates that the world was not made safe for democracy simply by our victory over Germany. A rigid control of all communications leaving Egypt and deliberate misrepresentation of the facts in the case were the two means British officials in Egypt hoped to use to annex Egypt to the British Empire. But the British in Egypt were poor psychologists. They overestimated the power of machine-guns and bayonets to stifle the voice of a nation. They did not realize that the civilized world had changed its ideas a bit since 1914. If they had kept the promises made to the Egyptians during the war and had acted in good faith, the Egyptian question could have been solved without damage to British prestige and to British imperial interests.

On November 13, 1918, Premier

Rushdi Pasha, with the approval of the sultan, asked the British military authorities for passports for himself and Adly Yeghen Pasha to go to London to discuss the status of Egypt with the British Government. The request was flatly refused. Realizing that he had been deceived and was a prisoner in his own country, the premier resigned. So did Adly Yeghen Pasha. No attention was paid to the resignations. Thinking that he might be able to convince the British of the madness as well as the bad faith of the course they were following, Rushdi Pasha remained in office for several months. Despite the efforts of the military and police to prevent a vote, the Egyptian Legislative Assembly and all the leading men of Egypt balloted for and elected a national delegation to the peace conference. Premier Rushdi Pasha strongly advised the British high commissioner, Sir Reginald Wingate, to allow this delegation to go to London and there arrange with the British Government to participate in the peace conference. Sir Reginald, who had spent his life in serving British interests in that part of the world, felt that the delegation was representative and the wish to speak for Egypt reasonable. But neither the opinion of Rushdi Pasha nor of the high commissioner prevailed against the occult influences that were determined to use the victory in the World War to sanction definitely the British title to Egypt.

On March 8, 1919, after the British authorities had failed to secure the consent of any influential Egyptian to succeed Rushdi Pasha, they decided to employ intimidation. Saad Zaghloul Pasha, Mohammed Pasha Mahmoud, Ismail Pasha Sidky, and Hamad Pasha El-Bassil, the president and three prominent members of the delegation chosen to represent Egypt at the peace conference, were arrested without warning and hurried secretly from their homes. They were not given a chance to say good-bye to their families, arrange their business affairs, or even pack their clothing. Without any charge having been made against them, they were deported from Egypt on a war-ship and thrown into jail at Malta. The British authorities have had a year to justify

this act. They cannot do so. Not even by the widest stretch of imagination could they bring suspicion of conspiracy or disorder against these men, who had always been trusted by the British themselves. Saad Zaghloul Pasha, president of the delegation, is the best-loved man in Egypt, and I have been told over and over again by the highest British officials who had known him for years that he is a man of excellent judgment, conservative temperament, and unimpeachable character. He is idolized by the fellahen because of his lifelong devotion to their interests.¹ When the British arrested a lot of school-boys for expressing in an orderly manner the sentiment of love of country that is instilled into English school-boys in the same way they are taught to respect God, they gave their names as "Saad Zaghloul" one after the other. And they persisted in this tribute to the hero of Egypt despite flogging and the withholding of food. Some of the little fellows were not more than eleven or twelve.

The three associates of Zaghloul Pasha were men of the same high character. Mohammed Pasha is a graduate of Balliol College, Oxford. One of his friends of university days, a British official in Egypt, told me once that Mohammed Pasha was one of the finest and squarest fellows that had ever gone through Balliol. I can say the same of dear old Hamad Pasha, chief of the Bedouins of the Fayum, who has more personal power than any man in Egypt. He speaks French and English well enough to get along in a Paris salon, and until he espoused the nationalist cause, was the host and friend of English officials, archaeologists, and sportsmen. The brutal deportation did not break up or intimidate the national delegation. Zaghloul Pasha's place was temporarily taken by Sharawi Pasha, a quiet gentleman of the old school,

who would be in the House of Lords were he an Englishman. He is a great landed proprietor, generally respected for justice and fair dealing.

It was the deportation of these leaders of the Egyptian people that led to the so-called revolt. The British authorities tried to represent the troubles in Egypt as an uprising against public order that had to be suppressed, troubles instigated by Bolshevik agitators, and an example of what would happen if the mailed fist were removed for a minute. In response to this charge, the Egyptians published a White Book, giving documentary evidence concerning the promises and negotiations before the deportation of Zaghloul Pasha and his associates, and extracts from official court proceedings and photographs to prove the atrocities committed by British troops against an unarmed population. They begged the peace conference to send an international commission to Egypt to make an investigation and promised to stake their cause upon the report of such a commission.

When the British authorities realized that the Egyptian situation was getting out of hand and that the people could not be intimidated into giving up their demand for self-government without exterminating them, the national delegation was allowed to proceed to Paris, and the four leaders at Malta were released and dumped at Marseilles with no explanation or apology offered.

After Easter, the delegation finally arrived at the peace conference, but despite their letters to Messrs. Clemenceau, Lloyd George, and Wilson, their case was not heard. Their communications were ignored. Finally, the Treaty of Versailles was signed with the article arranging the British protectorate over Egypt.

The British speak of "the nationalist faction" in Egypt, and hint darkly at massacres of Christians and Europeans

¹ As an excellent illustration of how American public opinion is being misled, I quote from an otherwise excellent editorial on Foch in the New York "Times," February 8, 1920: "Contemptuous of the impertinent warning given him by one of those humbug 'Nationalist' Pashas who long to revive in Egypt unlimited taxation of the fellahen and unlimited application of the bastinado, the Tiger sailed gaily toward Alexandria." A scholarly and thoughtful writer penned these lines, but his knowledge of the Egyptian nationalist movement has evidently been gained from a propaganda source, and this grotesque misstatement was worked into the editorial for propaganda purposes. I challenge the New York "Times" editorial writer to bring proof to sustain the charge he makes here against Saad Zaghloul Pasha. The triumph of Egyptian nationalism means the betterment of the fellahen, socially and economically as well as politically. Freedom from the burden of British rule will lessen taxation for the fellahen and give them an opportunity to get an education, which at present is denied them.

if the British relax their strong military control. This can fool only the uninitiated. As far as I have been able to see, and I have enjoyed exceptional opportunities, the native Christians are fully as nationalist as the Mohammedans. If they have any fear of massacres, the high clergy of the Coptic Church and the intellectual elements among the Copts act most queerly. They have assured me that they are heart and soul with the Mohammedans in demanding independence; Christian priests have preached patriotic sermons in mosques; and hundreds of Coptic young men and boys defied the British machine-guns in the streets of Cairo and Assiut. When I visited the Presbyterian College at Assiut in 1916, one of the seniors, who had high standing, came to me secretly, and begged me not to believe the stories of religious antagonism. "It is the old trick of *divide et impera*," he explained. "All educated Copts realize that our interests are with our Mohammedan fellow-countrymen against the British. As long as we are under the régime instituted by Lord Cromer, there is no hope of happiness for an educated Egyptian. The British are killing our souls. But with education we awake to self-respect, and we cannot help challenging foreign rule. We are all willing to die for our freedom."

Viscount Milner's commission went to Egypt to investigate the "troubles." It did not occur to Viscount Milner and his associates that the British protectorate idea was dead, like many other provisions of the Treaty of Versailles. There is no longer the ghost of a chance of getting the Egyptian people to accept the disposition made of their country against their wishes and in violation of the British promises of forty years. The "nationalist faction" is the nation.

The princes of the sultan's family have issued two addresses, signed by all the possible heirs to the throne. The first, to the Egyptian nationalists, declares their adherence to the program of independence; the second, to Lord Milner, warns him of their solidarity in the national demand for complete independence.

Lord Curzon, in a burst of indignation, cried out recently that it was intolerable to suppose that victorious Great Britain would give up her title to Egypt. But her title to Egypt depends solely upon a big standing army, and that standing army Great Britain no longer has to send to the banks of the Nile.

The last resort of the Milner commission was to attempt to convince the powerful religious authorities of the Mohammedans that it was to their best interests to join hands with the British commission in settling the "difficulties." The Grand Mufti replied:

"No Egyptian will accept the protectorate or enter into a discussion with you except on the basis of independence."

Lord Milner warned the Grand Mufti that Great Britain had the power to impose her will forcibly upon Egypt. Immediately the Grand Mufti rose, to signify that the audience was terminated, and said:

"As a religious chief I can only say and affirm that it is impossible to convince the nation of the utility of a thing of which I myself am unconvinced. The entire nation claims its independence, and it would, therefore, be useless to speak in any other language. I do not forget your power. But if Egyptians bend to-day before force, they will seize the first occasion to revolt. The guaranty of force is not eternal."

Is it?

¹ Do not weigh too lightly this argument about self-respect. Put yourself in the place of the educated Egyptian, who, in the Cromer system, is denied any real authority in the management of his country's affairs. There is always an Englishman over him. The Manchester "Guardian" of January 18, 1920, says: "It was assumed that the Administration was best fitted to decide what was for the good of Egypt, and that the Egyptian people would accept and obey without question, as it had done for nearly forty years. That delusion has gone, swept away by the events of last March." The "Guardian" goes on to demonstrate that the British are losing their hold on Egypt because British officials felt they could ignore "the natives" and run things as they pleased. Two specific illustrations are given. The new Penal Code was drawn up by British officials, and "it did not occur for a moment to the authorities that it was necessary for the Egyptians to have a primary part in shaping the law under which they were going to live." The new Constitution for Egypt under the British protectorate was drawn up without consulting a single Egyptian and presented to Premier Rushdi Fasha. He had known nothing about it. Told he had to accept it, he refused. Then he was threatened. He resigned, and the troubles broke out.

